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AUTHOR Bova, Breda Murphy
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ABSTRACT

To determine whether adults who were grouped according to selected variables differed in their reasons for participating in education programs, the Educational Participation Scale was administered to 322 part-time adult students. Focus was on age, sex, institution, level of educational attainment, and occupational groupings. The responses were factor analyzed, and the following five scales were developed: Social Relationship, Professional Advancement, Social Welfare, Escape/Stimulation, and Cognitive Interest. Some of the findings were these: (1) younger adults, 18 to 22 years of age, scored higher on the Social Relationship Scale then did any other age group while housewives scored higher than any other occupational group: (2) women as well as health and clerical workers scored higher than other respondents on the Professional Advancement Scale: (3) adult students 40-45 years of age along with housewives and health workers scored high on the Social Welfare Scale: (4) 18 to 22 year old adults in early transition scored higher on Escape/Stimulation Scale than those respondents who were in other life stages: and (5) respondents in the 40-45 years old mid-life transition were more highly motivated by Cognitive Interest Scale reasons than were those in other life stages. (EM)

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MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS OF ADULTS IN TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL AND POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

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Breda Murphy Bova

Assistant Professor
Department of Secondary
and Adult Teacher Education
University of New Mexico

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The Problem

Amidst discussions of commitments to the concept of "lifelong learning," there has been increased interest in developing greater awareness of the characteristics of those adults who are taking part in post-secondary educational activities at various institutions. One emphasis has been on the exploration of reasons or motivations that have influenced the participation of adults in various educational activities. Writers have suggested that participation in adult education can be explained as a function of maturation, or as Havighurst describes it, the need to resolve developmental tasks. Individuals have to respond to critical psychosocial needs stages in their lives which may be resolved through participation in adult education and, as Boshier[1] explained, the motives for that participation change as a function of age.

Klevins[8] pointed out that if we link up the developmental stages of adults with motives we can see why adults, at certain stages of their lives, generally tend to be prompted by certain motives more than by others. He went on to point out that this is why it is necessary to deal with motivations as seen from the individual's life cycle. This means that an individual's needs must be seen in the context of the life cycle at the various levels.

Research conducted by Neugarten[12] revealed that adults, having lived longer and having a greater apperceptive mass of past experiences, are not only much more complex than children, but they are also much more differentiated and less dependent on immediate influences of the environment. At the same time, however, it should be possible to predict the principal events, preoccupations, and motivations of adults during each major period in their lives within a mutable society. At the most general or molar level adults pass through certain age cycles, or as Havighurst[7] describes them, "periods of dominant concerns" during which at a given point of physical and mental maturation they expect themselves to behave in a certain manner. Three of the most important life cycle scholars, Robert Gould[6] of UCLA, Daniel Levinson[10] of Yale, and Bernice Neugarten[12] of the University of Chicago, have gone far beyond the gross mapping of life stages as done by Erikson[5] and Havighurst[7] to reach some remarkably similar conclusions about stages of adult development. Generally they have agreed that adult development implies a kind of growth schedule for all individuals. While the content of one's life may vary because of unique heredity, special environment, and personal interaction with the environment, everyone's development consists of the same stages encountered at about the same time. The topology of adulthood that they mapped included:

1. The Early Adult Transition (18-22 years of age). There are two developmental tasks to be accomplished during this period. The first task is to begin moving out of the adolescent world. This involves the modification of termination of existing relationships with important persons, groups, and institutions. The second task is to make a preliminary step into the adult world: to explore its possibilities, to imagine oneself as a participant in it, and to test and make some preliminary choices for adult living. In this period an individual is on the boundary between adolescence and adulthood.

2. Entering the Adult World (23-28 years). During this phase the individual shifts the center of his life from the family of his origin to establishment of a home base of his own. According to Neugarten[12] s/he makes and tests a variety of initial choices regarding occupations, love relationships, peers, and values. S/he has two primary antithetical tasks: (a) s/he needs to explore the possibilities for adult living: to keep his options open, avoid strong commitments and maximize the alternatives. Levinson noted that this task is reflected in a sense of adventure and wonderment. (b) The contrasting task is to create a stable life structure: become more responsible with plans to make something of his life. Finding a balance between these two tasks is not easy. If the first predominates, life has an extremely transient and rootless quality. If the second predominates, there is danger of committing oneself too early to a structure, without sufficient exploration of alternatives.

3. The Age 30 Transition (28-32 years). At about 28, Levinson[10] noted, the provisional quality of the twenties is ending and life is becoming more serious, more "for real." The task of this period is to work on the flaws and limitations of the first adult life structure. It is usually a time of reform, not revolution. At this time an individual may make important new choices, or may reaffirm old ones with regard to his occupation and life style.

The first three periods--The Early Adult Transition, Entering the Adult World, and the Age Thirty Transition--generally last about fifteen years. Together they constitute the preparatory or novice phase of early adulthood.

4. Settling Down State (33-40 years). The second life structure takes shape at the end of the Age Thirty Transition and persists until about age 40. This structure is the vehicle for the culmination of early adulthood. Levinson[10] noted that individuals seek to invest themselves in the major components of the structure--work, family, friendships, leisure, community--whatever is

most important to them, and to realize their youthful aspirations and goals.

A person has two major tasks during this period: (a) S/he needs to try to establish a niche in society, to anchor his life more firmly, and develop competence in his chosen field. (b) A person works at "making it" during this period, striving to advance and progress on a timetable. Levinson[10] uses the term "making it" broadly to include all efforts to build a better life for oneself and to be affirmed by the tribe.

This can be a fateful time in one's life. Attaining seniority and approaching the top rung of the ladder are signs that the person is truly an adult. Although the process brings new rewards, it also brings additional responsibilities and pressures. It means that the person must give up more of the child that is within him--an internal figure who is never completely outgrown, and certainly not in early adulthood.

5. Mid-Life Transition (40-45 years). The life structure again comes into question. It becomes important to ask: What have I done with my life? What do I really get and give to my family, children, community, self? What is it I truly want for myself and others? Levinson[10] noted that for the great majority of people this is a time of moderate or severe crisis. It is a period of great struggle within the self and with the external world. Neugarten[12] pointed out that the reassessment of the self is a prevailing theme of this time and that reflection is a striking characteristic of the mental life of middle-aged persons. People question nearly every aspect of their lives and feel that they cannot go on as before. They will need several years to form a new path or modify an existing one.

6. Entering Middle Adulthood (45-50 years). The structure that emerges in the middle forties varies greatly in its satisfaction, that is, its suitability for the self and its workability in the world. Levinson[10] reported that

some individuals have suffered such irreparable defeats in childhood or early adulthood and have been so little able to work on the tasks of their Mid-life Transition that they lack the inner and outer resources for creating a minimally adequate structure at this point in their lives. These people face a middle adulthood of restriction and decline. Others form a structure that is reasonably viable in the world but poorly connected to the self. Although they do their bit for themselves and others, their lives are lacking in inner excitement and meaning. Still others have started a middle adulthood that will have its own special satisfactions and fulfillments. For these people, middle adulthood is often the fullest and most creative season in the life cycle. They are less tyrannized by the ambitions, passions, and illusions of youth. They can be more deeply attached to others and yet more separate, more centered in the self. Neugarten[12] noted that persons in this stage of life pay greater attention to their feelings, experiences, and cognitive processes. There is a decreasing attachment to the material things in life and for them, according to Levinson[10] the season passes in its best and most satisfying rhythm.

7. Middle Adulthood (50-on). During this time people usually become less competitive and more inner directed. Life seems to settle and there is a sense that we are whoever we are going to be. This does not mean that we will be immune from the hazards of life after we hit fifty. Sickness, divorce, physical deterioration, death of many of our closest friends and family members, and forced retirement begin to pile up after fifty. Gould[6] noted that people in this stage were able to face these hazards of later life with greater strength because of the greater knowledge they had of themselves.

The psychological orientations of people reflect the needs, cognitive style, and personality states that mediate their perception of opportunities for participation in various adult educational activities. Knox[9] reminded us

that throughout the adult life cycle subjective orientations toward participation in adult education operate within the objective organizations of behavioral settings contained in an individual's life space. Writers have suggested that participation in adult education can be explained as a function of maturation, or as Havighurst[7] describes it, the need to resolve developmental tasks. Individuals have to respond to critical psychosocial needs stages in their life, which may be resolved through participation in adult education and, as Boshier[1] explained, the motives for that participation change as a function of age.

Klevins[8] pointed out that if we link up the developmental stages of adults with motives, we can see why adults, at certain stages of their life, generally tend to be prompted by certain motives more than by others. He went on to point out that this is why it is necessary to deal with motivations as seen from the individual's life cycle. This means that an individual's needs must be seen in the context of the life cycle at the various levels.

The reasons why adults participate in adult education has long been of paramount interest to adult educators. When adults are asked why they are taking part in various educational activities, some may say education satisfies a yearning to know or feeds an appetite for knowledge. Others contend that the major goal to be achieved through education is to contribute to the solution of ills in present day society--racism, poverty, pollution, segregation, or mental illness. Others would perhaps agree that to reach a goal for society's sake is commendable but believe that the main goal to be achieved is to learn to do one's job better, to get an increase in salary, to remain competitive in one's profession, to improve one's ability to rear children, or to achieve some similar personal ambition. Some adults would staunchly defend other possible aims of their participation in education activities. In some cases the reasons are mixed and seem to be inconsistent.

Amidst discussions of commitments to the concept of "life-long learning," there has been heightened interest in developing greater awareness of the characteristics of those adults who are taking part in post-secondary educational activities at various institutions. One emphasis has been the exploration of reasons or motivations that have influenced the participation of adults in various educational activities.

Motivational research between institutions has been recommended by researchers such as Morstain and Smart[11] who have hypothesized that motivational orientations should be consistent for adults in the same growth stages regardless of the institution in which they enroll. This is based on previous studies such as Morstain and Smart's, conducted with adult students in credit classes, and Boshier's[1] study conducted with adults in non-credit classes. This research project sought to enlarge this area of knowledge by examining three different providers of adult education.

The Methodology

The purpose of this study was twofold. One purpose was to analyze the factor patterns of the Educational Participation Scale developed by Boshier[2] in New Zealand. These were derived from a sample of adult education participants from the University of New Mexico, the Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute, and the Division of Continuing Education in order to contribute additional reliability and validity data to the instrument. The second purpose was to determine if there were any significant differences in expressed reasons for participation when adult learners were categorized by different age, sex, institution, level of educational attainment, and occupational groupings. The population for the study was adult students in a large metropolitan city. The sample consisted of part-time adult students from late afternoon and evening classes at the University of New Mexico, Continuing Education, and

evening classes at the Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute.

In this study, the Educational Participation Scale was administered to 322 adult education participants at the University of New Mexico, the Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute and the Division of Continuing Education. The responses were factor analyzed and the resulting factors were analyzed by Catell's Scree Test[3] to determine the appropriate number of factors to retain for rotation. The resulting factors were orthogonally rotated and, based on the obtained factor patterns, scales were developed by assigning an item to the dimension on which it had the highest factor loading. The five scales developed from this study were the following: (1) Social Relationship; (2) Professional Advancement; (3) Social Welfare; (4) Escape/Stimulation; (5) Cognitive Interest. Estimates of scale reliability were calculated by the coefficient alpha, a measure of internal consistency. The resulting scales were compared to those developed by Boshier in New Zealand and Morstain and Smart in New Jersey in order to generate additional reliability and validity data on the instrument.

The Findings

In this study the Educational Participation Scale yielded factor patterns that resembled quite closely those produced in the Morstain and Smart[11] study in New Jersey and Boshier's[2] study in Vancouver. A comparison of the scales produced by Boshier, Morstain and Smart and this study follows.

Scale I, Social Relationship Scale. Scale I, Social Relationships, contains seven of the nine items that appear in Morstain and Smart's[10] study in New Jersey and five additional items that loaded .40 or higher on this factor.

Scale II, Professional Advancement Scale. Scale II, Professional Advancement, contains four of the nine items that appear on the Morstain and Smart[10]

scale and six of the eleven items from Boshier's[2] Vancouver study scale plus an additional two items that loaded .40 or higher.

Scale III, Social Welfare Scale. Scale III, Social Welfare, contains five of the six items from the Morstain and Smart[10] scale and all of the items from Boshier's[2] Social Welfare scale.

Scale IV, Escape/Stimulation Scale. Scale IV, is identical to Morstain and Smart's[10] and contains 9 of the 12 items from Boshier's[2] scale.

Scale V, Cognitive Interest Scale. Scale V, Cognitive Interest, is identical to both the Morstain and Smart[11] Cognitive Interest scale and Boshier's[2] Cognitive Interest scale. (See Appendix I for Scale components)

There was a great deal of similarity in the factor patterns across the three samples, as reported above, of adult education participants. Furthermore, in terms of the reliability of the Educational Participation Scale scales, the high coefficient alphas reported for each scale in this study, from .94 to .77, is additional evidence which is consistent with the high coefficient alphas of the Morstain and Smart study, as well as the high test/retest coefficients found in Boshier's[2] study. The excellent validity and reliability data generated by this study, in conjunction with the fact that three types of adult educational agencies were sampled, combined with the results of previous studies utilizing the Educational Participation Scale, make this a highly desirable instrument for use with adults in different types of adult educational institutions. The instrument has great potential for the future. It can be easily administered by individual classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators to ascertain why a particular group of adults is participating in a specific adult educational activity. It can be administered to a single adult in a counseling situation as easily as to an entire class. This study has added a great deal of information that was being sought on this instrument

with the inclusion of students from different adult education institutions.

The results of this study also indicate that the importance of certain reasons for participation in various adult education classes showed noticeable variation across different groupings of adult learners.

Some of the significant findings were:

1. Younger adults, in the early adult transition, 18-22 years of age, scored significantly higher on the Social Relationship portion of the Educational Participation Scale than did any other age group and housewives scored significantly higher on this scale than did any other occupational group.

2. Women scored significantly higher on the Professional Advancement portion of the Educational Participation scale, regardless of the stage of life that they were in at the time. In addition, those who listed their occupations as housewives, health workers and clerical personnel scored significantly higher on this scale.

3. Those subjects aged 40-45 in the mid-life transition scored significantly high on the Social Welfare portion of the Educational Participation Scale. Housewives and health workers also scored high on this scale.

4. The subjects who were in the early adult transition, 18 to 22 years of age, scored significantly higher on the Escape/Stimulation portion of the Educational Participation Scale than did those in the remaining life stages.

5. Those in the mid-life transition, age 40-45, were more highly motivated by Cognitive Interest reasons than were those subjects in the other life stages.

Conclusions and Implications

If, as adult educators, we can assume that an adult education institution's programs and policies are best considered with reference to the characteristics

of its students, this research in the area of educational participation will help educators gain a better understanding of the characteristics and attitudes of adult learners and have important implications for program development and instructional strategies in adult education.

The development of effective programs and instructional strategies for adult education should take account of the whole person and the variety of needs and interests that s/he brings to the learning situation. This research study has confirmed basic needs that adults who participate in adult educational activities have: one is the need for meaningful social contact and the other for intellectual stimulation. This suggests widespread use of participatory methods of learning, and as Darkenwald[4] suggested, the creation of physical and psychological environments that are relaxed and conducive to open communication and interaction. Group work should be encouraged as well as meaningful opportunities to learn from the surrounding community. A large number of subjects in this study scored high on the Social Relationships Scale and the Social Welfare Scale indicating a desire for contact and involvement in the community around them as well as for the development of meaningful social relationships. Using the community as a learning tool has been largely overlooked in most adult educational activities. Some examples of implementing the above are the following:

1. A speakers directory should be developed by the local or state adult education association. They are an excellent source of talent. Such a speakers list as "Speakers Bureau" published by the University of New Mexico can be of assistance to adult educators.

2. The early adult transition proved to be a significant phase of adult life in this study. Stevens-Long[13] has noted that during this time the problem-solving ability of the adult is at its peak. Strategies within the

classroom should make use of this asset. Classes with a large majority of students in this age group could be centered around the improvement and sharpening of this problem-solving ability. Students could be assisted with research techniques and research problems instead of being lectured on them. This active research could involve investigating social problems within the community accompanied by teamwork, which satisfies the social relationships that this age group is also seeking.

3. The mid-life transition was also discovered to be a highly significant time in the life of adults in this study. Many of these people scored high on the Cognitive Interest Scale indicating that they are interested in learning for the sake of learning and not necessarily for the betterment of their professional career. Many of these people welcome a formal lecture approach that is highly factual and are taking the course because they want to acquire the knowledge that the course has to offer and not necessarily to form new social contacts.

4. Housewives specifically and women in general scored significantly high on many scales in this study. Stevens-Long[13] has noted that women returning to school are becoming more aggressive, assertive and dominant and this usually continues throughout the later years. Courses with these women in them should provide opportunities for individual presentations and committee work to help make these aggressive and assertive drives assets for these people and beneficial to the community.

While many of the adults in our classes are not truly volunteers for learning, if our classes appeal to motivations that we know exist in the adult, many will return, the next time on their own, to become true volunteers for learning, and perhaps lifelong learners.

Appendix I

Scales Developed from Factor Analysis of Boshier's Educational Participation Scale

Scale I

Social Relationships

Item Number		Factor Loading
10	To be accepted by others	.50
15	To fulfill a need for personal associations and friendships	.55
17	To meet members of the opposite sex	.57
28	To become acquainted with congenial people	.64
34	To keep up with others	.55
35	To improve my social relationships	.78
37	To take part in an activity which is customary in circles in which I move	.61
39	To maintain or improve my social position	.60
42	To comply with someone else's suggestions	.51
44	To make new friends	.67
46	To comply with the fact that people with status attend adult education classes	.58
47	To comply with instructions from someone else	.50

Scale II

Professional Advancement

Item Number		Factor Loading
3	To secure professional advancement	.72
6	To carry out the recommendation of some authority	.62
11	To give me higher status in my job	.78
12	To supplement a narrow previous education	.48
16	To keep up with competition	.67
20	To increase my competence in my job	.68
33	To comply with my employer's policy	.67
36	To carry out the expectations of someone with formal authority	.53

Scale III

Social Welfare

Item Number		Factor Loading
4	To become more effective as a citizen of this city	.56
21	To gain insight into myself and my problems	.51
24	To prepare for service to the community	.83
25	To gain insight into human relations	.72
32	To improve my ability to serve mankind	.81
45	To improve my ability to participate in community work	.78

Scale IV

Escape/Stimulation

Item Number		Factor Loading
5	To get relief from boredom	.69
9	To overcome the frustration of day-to-day living	.71
13	To stop myself from becoming a vegetable	.66
18	To escape the intellectual narrowness of my occupation	.57
19	To participate in group activity	.45
23	To escape television	.59
26	To have a few hours away from responsibilities	.52
29	To provide a contrast to the rest of my life	.53
31	To get a break in the routine of home or work	.23

Scale V

Cognitive Interest

Item Number		Factor Loading
1	To seek knowledge for its own sake	.73
8	To satisfy an inquiring mind	.58
43	To learn just for the sake of learning	.76

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